

## **Seawsawat Literature: Mekong Riverbank Reflections on Societies and Cultures**

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**Abstract:** Seawsawat is a literature originated in Lan Xang Kingdom and had been widely popular. It is proverbial tales integrated with Dharma puzzle to educate and entertain the audiences. Mainly, the monks would give a sermon of this type of literature in order to teach the people and villagers. It is common to preach in the funeral, or called “NganHuanDee.” Originally, Seawsawat was the folktales that villagers had been orally telling through generations. When they were able to inscribe the stories onto the ancient palm-leaf manuscripts, Seawsawat literature was then engraved as it had been a popular tale. Latterly, the literature became broadly well-known. It is assumed that Seawsawat is a tale developed from the folktale into the Jataka stories. In the beginning of each aphorism, there were mentions about the Lord Buddha who came down to the earth to preach and teach Ananda. When Lan Xang people received the influence and concept of Buddhism, hence they then adjusted the folktales into the stories of Jataka by inserting the concept of Bodhisattva about the transmigration of soul circle of life in the cycle of birth and death. This, Seawsawat then became the Jataka stories. In the study of Seawsawat literature in original Lao language, it was found that the literature was assumed to be written by Lao philosopher in between 1642-1643 during the period of King Suriyavongsatammiggaraj which was transliterated by MahasilaVeeravong in 1973. Currently, the literature has been used as one of Lao language textbooks for secondary school students by the Department of Secondary Education. Seawsawat was recorded onto the palm-leaf manuscripts or inscribed using Tham characters in total 10 sets each contained 21 leafs. The content would explain about what the Lord Buddha had taught and preached Ananda.

**Key words:** Seawsawat literature, social and cultural reflection, Mekong Riverbanks, leaf, birth

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Literature is a cultural record in the society. It acts similarly as the reflection that shows about life images, livelihood, culture, tradition, customs, belief, values, thoughts and way of life of people. Literature in addition, has also been inherited through generations acting as a cultural heritage (Nakhon, 2000). It is the social product involved with the livelihood of people and impacted the society. As being a part of a culture, literature thus plays a role that represent the identity of the group that owns the literature in various cultural aspects as well as the relations between people in the society and other objects around such as the nature of other societies that they have contacted with. Therefore, literature then is strongly connected to the society as it is what reflects the human lives that live in the world. The researcher then reflected the complex movements and relations of human lives in their works in a concrete way by centralizing on the

human who could express feeling and thoughts and have movements and relations with the external world surrounded them mergingly, not only on one side.

However, literature is considered as a mirror reflects the images in the past of each nation gracefully. Many of the historical stories could be learned from literature works for example, the story called “Four Reigns” by M.R. Kuekrit Pramote which was a literature based on major events in Thailand from the period of King Chulalongkorn until the end of King Ananda Mahidol. Meanwhile, the researchers, also illustrated the story about the royal palace from the exterior gate, central gate, interior gate, residence of royalty, residence of governors and throne hall. The life of people who lived in the royal palace was also presented in his research, from then royal family members to common people. The clothing, living, customs, education, entertainment and play were also illustrated.

From above, it could be summarized that literature has been a part of way of life of a community circulating

in the society that it has become a part that acts as a reflection of what has happened at a certain time when the literature work was written. Therefore, literature then could be considered as a medium to show about the past. The components sub-consisted in the literature in each local were all unique including the characters used and the style of writing. The possibility of using the literature to answer the need of the society all indicates certain identity of each local.

Similar to Seawsawat, a teaching literature with its originality from Lao PDR, it was assumed to be written during Lan Xang Kingdom and preaded through the lands in Northern and Northeastern Thailand. In the Northern region the literature was named "ChaleawChalad" while in the Northeastern; they used Seawsawat, Seawsawad and Sareesaleaw Seawsawat. In Laos, it was called Seawsawat. Besides its content inserted with Buddhism teaching and principles, Seawsawat story also involved the way of live, livelihood, customs and traditions, culture, belief and various values among Thai and Lao people living along the Mekong River (Intrayaem, 1981).

At present, the Seawsawat literature inscribed on ancient palm leaves from various places have been collected and transliterated from Tham and local Thai characters into central Thai language. As PraAriyanuwat Khemmajaree in 1981 explained about the roots of the term Seawsawat came from Chaleaw Chalad, meaning an expert in knowledge or sciences. Therefore, Chaleaw Chalad and Seawsawat then are the literature that persuaded the audience to read the beautiful wording of the work and at the same time learning from the content. Hence, these two literature works then were praised as a great literature and so far there has not been any literature would be as great as it is. Moreover, the Lao academics and authors had transliterated Seawsawat from Lao ancient characters inscribed on the palm leaves into the modern Lao language. Sila Weerawong in 1968 noted that "Seawsawat besides is educationally beneficial as it is used as a textbook, it also acts as a source of knowledge of social science and Lao culture. Reading this helps Lao people becoming faithful in the art and culture of Laos as well as loving the nation."

Seawsawat was not intentionally written for pleasure and entertainment only but it also contains two values involving what was going on in the society and culture including; it acts as an evidence revealing about the social and cultural statuses in certain time as a source of knowledge in which the reader could widely use in various aspects, especially in the aspect of history and sociology and it is an indicator for people in the society used to behave following the good morality as socially desired. Thus, Seawsawat then acts as a mechanism that

manages about peace in the society. The reader would be aware of what are the social values. The literature would help bringing about the understanding of people's characteristics and behaviors in that society quite well.

Due to the primary study of the Seawsawat literature, it was found to be interesting in various aspects. Meanings concealed in the literature aim to teach people from different backgrounds with different messages indirectly delivered to readers or listeners. The literature uses two types of tales, individual and frame tales expressing the teachings through actions of players who are humans and animals with symbolic interpretation to approach the teaching concepts presented in the literature.

The relationship between the Thai-Lao societies along Mekong River has been very close since the prosperity of Lanna (Thai) and Lan Xang (Isaan-Lao) especially in the age of King Bodhisarnraj of Lan Xang (2063-2090 BE). It was the golden time of arts and literatures. In aspect of Buddhism, it was the obligation of Lan Xang Kingdom that spiritual worship was prohibited and Buddhism was enhanced and was influenced from Lanna Kingdom i.e., Lanna letters for Buddhist doctrine which turned to be Lao alphabets. In addition, Lan Xang Kingdom was also closely related to Lanna Kingdom through royal marriage between both royal families.

There is the lack of communal studies in Seawsawat literatures in Lanna, Isaan and Lao editions concerned with social and cultural reflections of Thai-Lao people along Mekong River as they have been closely related i.e., Lanna, a land located in the northern part of Thailand and Lan Xang situated in People's Democratic Republic of Lao and Isaan region. Currently, they both are related because of the intimate cultures. According to the historical evidences of Lanna and Lan Xang, they were very intimate in cultural inheritance and in political relationship of the two kingdoms i.e., in the age of King Bodhisarnraj of Lan Xang (2059-2093 BE), he married to the princess of Chiang Mai and Prince Chaichettha, a son of King Bodhisarnraj was the King of Chiang Mai then returned to govern Vientiane (2093 BE) (Punnotkok, 1979). During this period, between both kingdoms, there was cultural flow and many literatures appeared to be similar in their titles such as Nang Pom Hom, Jam Pa Si Ton, Tao Kam Ka Dam and Seawsawat. These literatures provide social and cultural situations of people along the Mekong River at that time.

Therefore, researcher was interested to study the Seawsawat literature: social and cultural reflections appeared in Seawsawat literature in all three editions because former and current histories of these editions linked together.

**Objectives:** This study targeted to:

- Study the background and rational of Seawsawat literature
- Study the current circumstances and problems of Seawsawat literature
- Study the social and cultural reflections appeared in Seawsawat literature

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Literature samples of this study were Seawsawat literatures, Lao, Lanna and Isaan editions. The study target was three versions of Deawsawat literatures. The original Lao edition of Seawsawat prose literature was the first target. It was inscribed on palm leaves in Lao letters assumingly written by a Loa wise man during the age of King Suriyavongsatammiggaraj, 1642-1643 (2185-2186 BE). This edition was from hermeneutic one by MahasilaVeeravong in 1973.

Secondly, Seawsawat literature, Lanna edition named as “Chaleaw-Chalard” from Ban Jaem temple, Makuejaj, Muang, Lampoon Province, it was inscribed in 2415 BE in Lanna letters without name of author. There were totally 10 stacks of 418 leaves. The composition was in prose and pulpit rhetoric. It was from hermeneutic one by Kerdmongkol (1999).

Thirdly, it was an Isaan edition, “Seawsawat poetry” Kun Promprasart rearranged it into poetic literature in 1933. It was retrieved from Mahawararam temple, Muang, Ubonratchathani Province using Tai Noi letters as the local Isaan language. It had been in prose published in 1967 by Siritham press, Ubonratchathani and rearranged into poems published in 1967. Research tools to collect data were composed of these following forms:

- Contextually analytical form of 3 Seawsawat literatures to compare and contrast the contexts to link the relations of 3 regions to seek for the literature history
- Contextually analytical form of 3 Seawsawat literatures and Jatakatale of 500-life god to seek for the origin of tales in Seawsawat literature
- Collection form of social and cultural reflections appeared in 3 Seawsawat literatures. It consisted of 5 aspects of social reflections such as:
  - Politics and public administration
  - Law
  - Economy
  - Family
  - Religion

Total 4 cultural aspects such as:

- Belief
- Value
- Tradition
- Philosophy and ethics

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Background of seawsawat literature:** Seawsawat was widely favorable and originated in Lan Xang Kingdom. It was a compilation of proverbial tales with Buddhist teaching puzzles. It was the wisdom enriching literature and emotionally valuable. Usually, the literature was delivered through Buddhist preachments to teach people and it was read in funerals so called “NganHuan Dee” (entertainment of funeral (Koonthawee, 1986). This literature was actually the tales delivered orally. Once the inscription on palm leaves was created, the wise man at that time then recorded the tales on the leaves. As formerly popular tales, it was then widely recognized once it was inscribed on the palm leaves. This is corresponding to SilaVeeraVong’s report i.e., Seawsawat was assumingly the tale originating from folk tales then developed into Jataka tales. In the first part of each edition, there was the story related to Buddha’s preachments delivered to his fellow, Ananda.

Once Lan Xang was influenced by Buddhism, the folk tales were then changed into Jataka tales with the contexts of Bodhisattava, cycle of reincarnation in round of existence. Seawsawat was then finally, the story of Jataka tale which was concerned with past lives of Buddha. The Jataka tale was introduced into Thailand around 17-18th Buddhist century due to the evidence in Srichum temple. The evidence was the inscription of Jatakatale believed that it was composed before the establishment of Sukothai Kingdom and before the founding of King Kunsriintadrathit’s family (The collection of stone inscriptions, 1983). The Jataka tale was introduced into Lanna together with Buddhism. The golden time of Buddhism and literatures of Lanna was around 1517-1523. When King of Lan Xang, King Bodhisararaj married to a daughter of King Ked Klao of Chiang Mai. A number of monks and Tripitika were migrated to Lan Xang land. Later in 1547, King Chaichetta, a son of King Bodhisararaj, again brought Jataka literature and skillful craftsmen from Chiang Mai to Lan Xang. This was then the reason why Lan Xang Kingdom was influenced by Lanna culture and Isaan also was through Lan Xang.

In the context of the literatures, in most cases, the authors used proverbial teachings to tell the tales to

explain those proverbs and teachings. The most of selected tales were from Dhamma chapter or Mangalattadhipani. The outline of the tale was influentially referred to Nang Tan Tri tale, Arab Ratree or Pan NuengDhiva from India.

**The background of Seawsawat, Lao edition “Seawsawat”**

**Literature style:** According to the results, it could be concluded that Seawsard, Loa edition was assumingly written by a Lao savant in 1643-1643 or 2185-2186 BE during the era of King Suriyavongsatammiggaraj. It was hermeneutically interpreted by MahasilaVeeravong in 1973 or 2516 BE. Currently, it is used as a textbook of Lao language by the department of secondary education, ministry of education.

Seawsawat literature was inscribed on palm leaves (alphabetical recording). Totally, there were 10 stacks of them, 21 leaves per stack. Its contexts were related to the Buddha’s teachings preached to his fellow, Ananda. MahaSilaVeeravong assumed that it was a book written by Lao savant but no exact research name existed, during the era of King Suriyavongsatammiggaraj 1643-1643 or 2185-2186 BE. In the introduction of the literature, the author wrote the story of Buddha’s preachments to Ananda. The time of literature composition was indicated due to these following evidences.

The comparative study of the literature contexts and history suggested that Seawsard, Loa edition was assumingly written by Lao savant in 1643-1643 or 2185-2186 BE. during the era of King Suriyavongsatammiggaraj because of various indications.

Firstly, in 1641 (2184 BE), Dutch trading diplomat named Van Wusthoff entered to Vientiane. He brought binoculars and gave them to the monk chief or the abbot of Tat Pranom temple as a souvenir. The binoculars were tools composed of thick lenses made of glass. Lens, an English word was appeared in Seawsawat literature that Tao Seawsawat went away to trade with Foreign sailors and he saw the sailors using the binoculars to navigate the direction. “Then, Sampao brings the tools, “front lenses” out which are made of glass pointing to stars”.

The next evidence was associated with the Dutch trading diplomat entering to Vientiane claimed in a book, France Asie (Loa) (The interview of Lao PDR) which was published by Loa official in 1956 (2499 BE). The book was about the journey of Van Wusthoff, a Dutch trading diplomat who came to Vientiane in 1641 (in the King Suriyavongsatammiggaraj age). Prior to Van Wusthoff, there was a group of Lao traders going to Pattavia (Indonesia) having Gwan MuanTob as the leader of the group. They went there with Abel Tasman ship. Gwan

MuanTob met General Antoine Van Diemen, the mayor of Pattavia. He asked the General to send a diplomat to trade with Lao PDR. So that, Van Wusthoff as a trading diplomat together with GwanMuanTob was then sent to Vientiane. At that time, Van Wusthoff was the trading in Khmer. He left Khmer in 1641 (2148 BE) and traveled across Mekong River to meet King Suriyavongsatammiggaraj at Pra Tat Luang before returning to Khmer.

According to these evidence from France Asie, they were then the supports the time period that the literature was composed and the author might have seen the binoculars (front glass lenses) used by the Dutch. The author might travel to trade overseas with the Dutch. Assumingly, the author might have been GwanMuangTob or one of the Lao traders who traveled with them as a translator because in the literature, Seawsawat, there were the scenarios that Seawsawat went away to trade with other traders in Foreign countries. This was compliant with Thailand’s history in the age of King Naraimaharaj, Ayuttaya era. The King sent PrayaKosadhibodi (Paan) to France with French merchants as the diplomat. In the same period, Lan Xang Kingdom was prosperous and this led to the trading businesses with Thailand and other European countries. It was the golden age of both countries, Thailand and Lao during the age of King Naraimaharaj and King Suriyavongsatammiggaraj resulting in the cultural exchanges including literature.

Therefore, it was able to conclude that Seawsawat literature was written during the age of King Suriyavongsatammiggaraj of Vientiane 1643-1643 or 2185-2186 BE. Some of the literature contexts were congruent to historical situations of Thailand and Lao.

Seawsawat literature, Loa edition aimed to be as “NganHuan Dee or the entertainment in funerals” for preaching people in the funeral ceremonies to be ethical because it not only contained Buddhist teachings but it also had contexts of livelihoods, ways of life, traditions, cultures, belief and values of Thai and Lao people along the Mekong River. In addition, the literature was educationally useful as it could be a study book and documents containing social and cultural knowledge for Laos to admire their arts, cultures and nation.

**Context:** In Lao edition, the outline of the literature was from a Loa literature called Panjatanta or Nang Tan Tai which was influenced by Arab Ratree or Pan NuengDhiva with 43 tales in total.

In the context of the literatures, in most cases, the authors used proverbial teachings to tell the tales to explain. The most of selected tales were from Dhamma

chapter in Tripitika or Mangalattadhipani. The outline of the tale was influentially referred to Nang Tan Tri tale, Arab Ratre or Pan NuengDhiva from India.

**Literature concepts:** Seawsawat literature, Loa edition was formerly used in “NganHuan Dee or the entertainment in funerals”. In addition, the literature was educationally useful as it had the social and cultural knowledge for Laos to admire their arts, cultures and Buddhist teachings. It was also a general criterion to establish rules and regulations for peace and harmony in Lao society. The background of Seawsawat (Chaleaw-Chalard), Lanna edition.

**Literature style:** Seawsawat was a literature for teaching. There were different prototypes widely found in Lanna, Isaan and Lao. Chaleaw-Chalard was used as the literature tile of Lanna edition. Thus, Chaleaw-Chalard was then used to refer Seawsawat literature of Lanna edition.

Chaleaw-Chalard literature was from Ban Jaem temple, Makuejae, Muang, Lampon province, it was inscribed in 1872 in Lanna letters without name of author. There were totally 10 stacks, 418 pages. The composition was in prose and pulpit rhetoric and renewed as original one and the most complete edition interpreted by Kerdmongkol (1999).

Seawsawat (Chaleaw-Chalard) literature aimed to be as “NganHuan Dee or the entertainment in funerals” for preaching people in the funeral ceremonies to be ethical because it not only contained Buddhist teachings but it also had the ideas of livelihoods, ways of life, traditions, cultures, belief and values of Lanna people (Kerdmongkol, 1999).

**Literature context:** There were 5 prototypes of Chaleaw-Chalard Lanna editions according to the observation of Social Research Institute, Chiang Mai University. Chaleaw-Chalard from Ban Jaem Temple, Makuejae, Muang, Lampon Province, it was inscribed in Thai Minor Era 1234. There were totally 10 stacks, 418 palm leaves.

Chaleaw-Chalard from Nong Bua Temple, Pong, Pa Yao province inscribed in Thai Minor Era 1278, 1 stack of 42 leaves.

Chaleaw-Chalard from Sritia temple, Sritia, Ban Hing, Lampon province inscribed in Thai Minor Era 1309, 10 stacks of totally 510 leaves.

Chaleaw-Chalard from Mae Kam Sob Perm Temple, Mae Kam, Mae Jan, Chiang Rai Province inscribed in Thai Minor Era 1319. There were 10 stacks of 345 leaves.

Chaleaw-Chalard from Ban Mo Temple, Toong Luang, Prao, Chiang Mai province, no date of inscription, 12 stacks, 341 leaves.

Chaleaw-Chalard literature used in this study belonged to Ban Jaem Temple, Makuejae, Muang, Lampon Province, it was inscribed in 1872 in Lanna letters. There were totally 10 stacks, 418 leaves. The composition was in prose and pulpit rhetoric. It was renewed as the most original and completes one which well reflected society and culture of Lanna people.

Chaleaw-Chalard literature, Lanna edition was in form of frame tales. In each stack of the tales, there were two types of tellers, storyteller and taleteller.

The storyteller was a person stating the whole story from the beginning until the end. The taleteller was a player in the tale telling the tale story.

The narration of the players had different aims, i.e., Buddha narrated the tales to begin it and Chaleaw-Chalard’s father, Sampao and Chaleaw-Chalard were the tellers to delivers concepts of the tales. The players who acted as the taletellers were 4 gatekeepers, royal academy, crow, frog, fly and SaiLueng bird to support the tale concepts. There were 37 individual tales and 16 frame tales, 53 tales in total.

In the literature context of Chaleaw-Chalard, there were 53 tales without tale titles or hermeneutic person. It had to be titled due to tale players, tale proverbs and dominant situations of each tale (Kerdmongkol, 1999).

This Seawsawat (Chaleaw-Chalard) literature moreover was thoughtful rather than entertaining and its style of frame tales was alike to Panjatantra in Sanskrit. The context of Seawsawat (Chaleaw-Chalard) literature matched to Lao literature.

**Literature concept:** It was used to teach people through direct delivery of proverbs appeared in the tales and indirect messages delivered to readers and listeners to interpret and analytically process for obtaining conclusions.

**The background of Seawsawat, Isaan edition:** Seawsawat literature, Isaan edition was the poetic edition rearranged by Kun Promprasart in 1933. It was the original and the most complete one in Isam.

**Literature style:** Assumingly, it was written by 2 groups of people. The first one was a group of Buddhist monks. They had the social role as teachers of people to be ethical due to the Buddhism philosophy. The monks were also praised as they morally and ethically behaved. Thus, Seawsawat was then believed being written by the monks. Secondly, it was people who were formerly in monastic practice or academic savants because the literature contexts were subjected to be interpreted as it was

concealed with Buddhist puzzles. Thus, the author(s) of this literature could be insightful person in Dharma. NongluckKoonthawee also claimed that “the Seawsawat literature was likely written by monks other than normal people because the collaboration of Buddhist puzzles in the context was deeply intelligent. Therefore, the author (s) could be people who were more insightful in Dharma than others. In addition, literatures for preaching in Lanna and Isaan, mostly, the authors were monks who were expertise in Dharma because they had more time than others. For those who used to be in the monastery, once they left the monastic status, they were occupied by their livelihood with insufficient time to compose a literature” (Khuntawee, 1986).

The literature was used as the entertainment in “NganHuen Dee or funerals” and other special occasions such as Buddhist Lent Days or Boon Kao Sak festival (Holy rice festival) because the literature contexts were entertaining and attracted to people. Also, it delivered teachings and it was mindfully instructing to people to understand Buddhist Dharma and to behave morally and ethically which was one of Buddhism intentions.

**Literature context:** The literature, Seawsawat used in this study was rearranged by Kun Promprasart into poetic literature in 1933. It was retrieved from Mahawararam temple, Muang, Ubonrachathani Province using Tai Noi letters, the local Isaan language. There were totally 66 tales studied from this version of poetic Seawsawat.

**Literature concepts:** To deliver the entertainment in “NganHuen Dee or funeral”. It was to entertain relatives of the dead to appease and alleviate sorrows. Normally, Isaan people had “NganHuan Dee” at days 3 after cremation.

To entertain people in special festive occasions such as Buddhist Lent Days or Boon Kao Sak festival (Holy labeled rice festival) because the literature contexts were entertaining and attracted to people. Also, it delivered teachings and it was mindfully instructing without boredom.

Seawsawat literature was to help people to understand Buddhism philosophy, to understand its teaching and to behave morally and ethically which was one of Buddhism intentions. The teachings in the literature were also involved in general social norms of Isaan people for unity and harmony. The preachments in Seawsawat literature were fascinating thus it was valuable to study for application in current social situations.

This literature was a reflective tool to persuade the governors at that time to be aware of people importance

and to reduce the gap between people and the governor to be more closely related for common unity and social harmony.

It was also to make people to be aware of education because the literature had the role to activate illiterate Isaan people to educate themselves.

## CONCLUSION

Formerly, Lan Xang people did not have Buddhism as their belief. Thus, spirits like ancestral spirits and natures were revered by people. When Buddhism was introduced to their belief, the folk tales were then modified into fable tales, Jataka tales with the idea of Bodhisattava and cycle of reincarnation in round of existence. Accordingly, the sub-tales inside the literatures were categorized as fable tales.

Jataka was concerned with past lives of Buddha introduced into Thailand around 17-18th Buddhist century indicated by the evidence in Srichum temple. The evidence was the inscription stone of Jataka tales believed that they were created before the establishment of Sukothai Kingdom and before the founding of King Kunsriintadrathit's family (The collection of stone inscriptions, 1983). In 20th Buddhist century, Lannaculture was expanded into Lan Xang. Ideas and concepts of literature inscription were also influenced by Lanna culture in the same time when it was the golden age of Lanna literatures and religion.

In 1378-1457, the Lanna inscription was made with only PhakKam alphabets (Tai Noi) and the use of local or Tham alphabets was terminated. Then, the Tham alphabets were restored during the age of King Tilokkaraj, 1441. He was a patronage of new Lanka Buddhism and the region was sorted for the first time at Jedi Jed Yod temple, 1477. The Tham alphabets were used to inscribe the sorted religious documents. If any of them was in PhakKam letters (Tai Noi), it was considered as unsorted document (Nakhon, 2000). Therefore, in term of Lanna ideology, local alphabets or Tham alphabets were exclusively used to inscribe the religious stories. This was then the impact of the inscription of Jataka tales or other Buddhist stories. Tai Noi alphabets were instead used to inscribe secular-related ones.

When Jataka or fable tales were introduced into Lanna with Buddhism, it was in the golden time of Buddhism and literatures of Lanna around 1517-1523 when King of Lan Xang, King Bodhisararaj married to a daughter of King Ked Klao of Chiang Mai. A number of monks and Tripitika were migrated to Lan Xang land. Later in 1547, King Chaichetta, son of King Bodhisararaj, again

brought Jataka literature and skillful craftsmen from Chiang Mai to Lan Xang. This was then the reason Lan Xang Kingdom was influenced by Lanna culture and Isaan also was through Lan Xang. In accordance with Tawat Pannotak's statement, it claimed that "Lanna was located in the North of Thailand closely related to Lan Xang situated in Lao PDR (formerly inclusive to Isaan).

Lanna and Lan Xang, they had been closely related according to the historical evidences from both kingdoms. This was because of cultural inheritance and political relationship of the two kingdoms in the age of King Bodhisarnraj of Lan Xang (1516-1550) who married the princess of Chiang Mai and then Prince Chaichettha, a son of King Bodhisarnraj, the King of Chiang Mai returned to govern Vientiane in 1550 (Punnothok, 1979). SukanyaPattrachai stated that "The connection between any societies leads to a phenomenal of literature and

cultural flows from one society to another and this is common. Literatures and cultures of closely related societies are certainly similar to each other".

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